

# Reflections on the conference

By Peter Powell

Reflections on the 49th annual international conference in Portland:

- The much-discussed dues increase passed with less opposition than might have been expected. Even a number of opponents said at the annual business meeting that the need was probably there even though it might hurt a bit in the personal pocketbook. A couple of comments by proponents might have helped tip the scale from a close vote to a relatively comfortable margin of passage. One noted that within a few days, some RSEsers at the conference had spent the \$5 increase many times over in over-priced restaurants and bars. Another had figured out that based on 2000 work hours a year, international dues (with the increase) were costing about 1.5 cents an hour. The recurring theme: How much is on-going quality education worth?

- A year or so ago, RSES proclaimed itself the best source to conduct voluntary certification industry-

wide—this before the society had a game plan to accomplish that goal. Now the society is putting that plan into effect. Some pilot programs were started and have been enjoying success. In Portland, Bill Podd, manager of tests and testing, gathered informal input from members of the Manufacturers Service Advisory Council, and formally discussed the groundrules and framework of the program with a specially selected task force made up of manufacturers and contractors from throughout the United States. Much still needs to be done, but Podd is hopeful that, with continued discussions with the task force, the pieces will better be in place by the mid-year board meeting in June.

- In his year as international president, Jim Capps intentionally and rightfully stirred up a tempest in RSES. Voluntary certification, foundation corporate memberships, the dues increase to curb a potentially dangerous deficit, a change in second year billing procedures, and more

computerization at international headquarters have all been prominent features of his tenure. The task facing new president Allen Moore is to take what Capps has stirred up and continue to channel those efforts into productive directions. He must not let such issues as voluntary certification and membership growth falter.

- Capps may have been a strong RSES leader, but he proved to be a lousy weather forecaster. For a year he traveled to regional meetings and always found time to encourage members to attend the international conference in Portland. At the same time he cautioned about the rain and cold common to the Pacific Northwest in the fall. The result: cloudless blue skies and temperatures in the 70s through much of the conference. When the rains finally came less than 24 hours before the conference's conclusion, the golf outing, tours and other outdoor activities were well over. ☹

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